



For Immediate Release

August 14, 2017

News Media Contact:

Anthony Swinger, (317) 233-2747 or

aswinger@oucc.IN.gov

South Bend Municipal Water rate case: Consumer comments invited

If you would like to comment on the City of South Bend’s proposed water rate increase, you have the opportunity to do so.

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) is inviting written comments on the city’s request through Monday, November 13, 2017. The OUCC – the state agency representing consumer interests in cases before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) – anticipates completing its review of the utility’s request and filing testimony on Friday, November 17, 2017.

According to its testimony and exhibits, the city is seeking new water rates due to increases in operating and maintenance costs and to fund a number of proposed capital improvements over the next six years. Projects cited in South Bend’s exhibits include water main, hydrant, and valve replacements, well field rehabilitation, filtration plant and booster station improvements, and meter replacements, along with new mains and storage tanks, new vehicles, a new office building, and a new billing system. South Bend’s last water rate increase received IURC approval in 2006.

The city is proposing to implement the requested rates in two phases. Under South Bend’s pending proposal, monthly water charges for a residential customer using 700 cubic feet (approximately 5,230 gallons per month) would rise as follows:

	Current Rates	Phase 1 (When Commission order is issued)	Phase 2 (1 year after Commission order)
In City*	\$13.81	\$16.86	\$20.56
Out of City*	\$16.57	\$19.22	\$23.44

*Amounts include fire protection charges.

Consumers who wish to submit written comments for the case record may do so via the OUCC’s Website at www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm, or by mail, email or fax:

- Mail: Consumer Services Staff
Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor
115 W. Washington St., Suite 1500 South
Indianapolis, IN 46204
- email: uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov
- Fax: (317) 232-5923

(Continued)

The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments no later than November 13, 2017 so that it can: 1) Consider them in preparing its testimony and 2) File them with the Commission to be included in the case's formal evidentiary record. Comments should include the consumer's **name, mailing address**, and a reference to "**IURC Cause No. 44951.**" Consumers with questions about submitting written comments can contact the OUCC's consumer services staff toll-free at 1-888-441-2494.

An IURC public hearing will be held on a future date to be determined.

Case updates will be posted on the OUCC's website at www.in.gov/oucc/2789.htm.

Only South Bend's water rates are at issue in this case. State law restricts the IURC's oversight of municipal water utilities to their rates, charges, and finances.

Indiana law does not give the IURC jurisdiction over municipal sewer utilities, leaving oversight of municipal sewer rates to locally elected city and town councils.

(IURC Cause No. 44951)

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) represents Indiana consumer interests before state and federal bodies that regulate utilities.

As a state agency, the OUCC's mission is to represent all Indiana consumers to ensure quality, reliable utility services at the most reasonable prices possible through dedicated advocacy, consumer education, and creative problem solving.

Visit us at www.IN.gov/OUCC, www.twitter.com/IndianaOUCC, or www.facebook.com/IndianaOUCC.

Sign up for our newsletter at www.IN.gov/OUCC/2356.htm.